

## CHAPTER II

### ISAAC

To Benjamin and Sarah D'Israeli a son Isaac, their only child, was born in 1766.

Nature [proceeds the Memoir from, which we have already drawn] had disqualified him, from his cradle, for the busy pursuits of men. A pale, pensive child, with large dark brown eyes, and flowing hair, had grown up beneath this roof of worldly energy and enjoyment, indicating even in his infancy, by the whole carriage of his life, that he was of a different order from those among whom he lived. Timid, susceptible, lost in reverie, fond of solitude, or seeking no better company than a book, the years had stolen on, till he arrived at that mournful period of boyhood when eccentricities excite attention and command no sympathy. Then commenced the age of domestic criticism. His mother, not incapable of deep affections, but so mortified by her social position that she lived until eighty without indulging in a tender expression, foresaw for her child only a future of degradation. Having a strong, clear mind, without any imagination, she believed that she beheld an inevitable doom. The tart remark and the contemptuous comment on her part, elicited, on the other, all the irritability of the poetic idiosyncrasy. After frantic ebullitions, for which, when the circumstances were analysed by an ordinary mind, there seemed no sufficient cause, my grandfather always interfered to soothe with good-tempered commonplaces, and promote peace. He was a man who thought that the only way to make people happy was to make them a present. He took it for granted that a boy in a passion wanted a toy or a guinea. At a later date when my father ran away from home, and after